

The development of IAPD from origin to its founding in nations around the world

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This article traces the course of development of IAPD from its origin to its founding in nations around the world. The article may not contain every nation that has thus far established IAPD, in part because reports in English sometimes do not emerge for some time after the founding.

The words "peace and development" are often paired, because the absence of peace -- war and lesser conflicts, which are prevalent -- are stunting progress in nations throughout the world. According to David Cortright, director of Policy Studies at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, the opposite is true as well, "All the standard indicators of economic development, including per capita income, economic growth rates, levels of trade and investment and degree of market openness, are significantly correlated with peace. Virtually every study on the causes of war finds a strong connection between low income and the likelihood of armed conflict." True Parents' introduction of IAPD into the pantheon of Unificationist organizations seems to indicate hands-on involvement in solving woes that plague the yet-to-be-restored world.



Seeking a culture of peace

The Universal Peace Federation and the American Clergy Leadership Council founded the Inter-religious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) at the 2017 Inter-religious Leadership Conference on November 13 in Seoul. On that day, Dr. Thomas Walsh served as the moderator. Dr. Michael Jenkins, the national co-chairman of ACLC, read True Father's historic statement calling for a religious component to the United Nations, an inter-religious council, to serve in the role of a senate. Father had first recommended this at Assembly 2000, held under the motto, "Renewing the United Nations and Building a Culture of Peace" on August 18, in a conference room within the United Nations Headquarters Building in New York City. A short excerpt follows:

One of the reasons I founded the Inter-religious and International Federation of World Peace was to help create an inter-religious assembly to serve as a senate or council within the United Nations. To implement this plan, I propose that each nation, in addition to its current ambassador, send a religious ambassador to the United Nations to serve as a member of the religious assembly, or UN senate. The mission of the representatives to this UN senate requires that they have a genuinely ecumenical or inter-religious consciousness and that they have the training and ability to teach a universal, trans-national ideal of peace.

Following Rev. Jenkins, a US evangelical Christian, a Swedish Buddhist and an Indian Muslim prayed and then an even wider spectrum of faith leaders made statements of support for the new organization before signing the resolution. The resolution launching IAPD places a strong emphasis on the influential power of religion, the authority of religious leaders and the responsibility of religious people to effect extreme and much needed changes in the world. "We affirm the unique and essential role that religions are called to play in bringing about a world of lasting peace, a world in which people of all nationalities, ethnicities, races, cultures and worldviews live together in mutual respect, harmony and cooperation as one family under God."

Of the launch, Dr. Walsh's commented, "We experienced an enormous outpouring that indicates a hunger and a need for the Inter-religious Association for Peace and Development.... The word "development" in IAPD indicates that we are not merely engaged in dialogue, but we are advocating and working for development at all levels -- individual moral and spiritual development; development of strong, healthy, loving families; good, stable communities without drugs, crime and poverty; restored nations that are peaceful and prosperous; and sustainable development that includes preservation of our environment while also bringing an end to hunger, poverty and conflict. We have been awakened. We are ready to march forward and get to work."



IAPD as it develops

Quite often, we found an organization in Korea, the homeland of our faith, and gradually the organization begins to develop a worldwide presence, sprouting in different nations as our members there assess their legal boundaries and other considerations before founding a local branch. On April 28, this year, UPF and FFWPU in Côte d'Ivoire founded a chapter of IAPD. The event attracted more than three hundred people. Religious figures, traditional chiefs, those active in NGOs and UPF ambassadors for peace took part in the founding. The following day, two hundred religious leaders and scholars launched IAPD for Europe and the Middle East in Vienna, Austria, at an International Leadership Conference, which took place in the days leading up to the Vienna 2018 Peace Starts with Me event. Archbishop Johannes Ndanga was one of the speakers that day. This is a portion of what he said:

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have seen the rapid development of science and technology especially in the fields of communication and transportation bringing humanity closer to one another in an unprecedented way. The global village concept is today more tangible than ever. However this globalization has come with its own loss as social ailments are easily carried from one country or community to the next. We all are aware that our world is immersed in deep suffering. Conflicts are still occurring in all corners of the world. Evil and injustice continue to afflict humanity. Many people are suffering in despair and spiritual poverty, even in materially advanced nations.

Many people are seeking solace through drugs and indiscriminate sex; they are running headlong down the road to spiritual and physical ruin. Obviously, nobody desires a world of such evil, conflict and despair. Another challenge is the ever-increasing inequality between developed and undeveloped nations. The lack of willingness to share technology and the control of the market price of raw materials and natural resources has made capitalism a system characterized by selfish individualism....

The time has come for religions to take leadership in the world. Leadership cannot emerge from blind faith or an arrogant, self-righteous attitude stemming from narrow-mindedness. True leadership arises when the subordinates want to submit to the will of Heaven intrinsically. It is time for religious people to step up and accept responsibility for the conditions of this age and including its unprincipled facets and to examine themselves deeply. Religious people need to repent for their failure to exemplify the practice of love and for being engrossed in their personal

salvation or the interests of their own religious denomination. Therefore, they failed to invest entirely for the salvation of humankind.

This age requires the practice of love, not only faith. God is calling us. He passionately wants to challenge injustice and evil in the world and express his true love. All religions need to be of one mind in making known and actualizing God's fervent hope for humanity. God transcends all rituals and doctrines, which have led to disputes between believers. He desires that we raise our spirits through profound spiritual dialog and exchange with him.... Religious leaders of all creeds need to take the lead in self-discipline and with mutual respect for one another build an influential inter-religious organization.



Taipei to Vienna

Taiwan, part of the Greater China Region, established both the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) and IAPD on May 19. The launching ceremonies attracted a hundred and eighty political and religious figures. Legislators, members of the Taipei City Council and the president of the Buddhist Youth Association were among those that supported the launch of the two organizations.

In Geneva, Switzerland, on May 31, at the World Council of Churches offices, Swiss members met to discuss the purpose, the possible structure and the particular significance of establishing a chapter of IAPD in their nation. A Christian theologian, Dr. Elmar Kuhn, secretary general of "Christian Solidarity International-Austria" for the right of religious freedom and dialogue of religions and dean of the class "world religions" at the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, thought the discussion was so important he traveled from Austria to participate in it. He had attended the inaugural event in Vienna.

On June 21, in Port Vila, Republic of Vanuatu, an island nation 1,090 miles (1,175 km) off the coast of Australia, the guest of honor at the founding of IAPP was minister of Climate Change Ham Lini, who had been prime minister (2004– 2008). Around seventy people attended the two-day workshop at which IAPP began.

On September 18, the Swiss did launch their national chapter in the Ecumenical Center of Geneva during a joint WFWP–UPF conference. Ms. Carolyn Handschin, European president of WFWP, asked four people to first state actions steps for the new organization. Her husband Heiner, among the four, suggested finding an office, launching a website and expanding connections with various local and international partners.

On September 21, the UN International Day of Peace, UPF and WFWP in Italy held a conference under the patronage of the Italian Senate, "The Right to Peace: Italy Bridge of Peace for a Stronger and Stable Europe." It took place in the *Sala Zuccari* (Zuccari Hall) named after Federico Zuccari (1539–1609) who painted frescoes on its ceiling depicting five episodes in the life of biblical King Solomon. In that luscious setting, Giuseppe Cali, UPF coordinator for Southern Europe, introduced IAPD. He described IAPP as a means of going beyond tolerance and understanding and moving toward acting to resolve conflicts and to achieve mutual prosperity.

Eight days later, UPF-Ecuador inaugurated IAPD at the Peace Embassy in Quito beginning with a water ceremony, symbolic of the unity of religions. Metropolitan Archbishop Chrysostmos Celi of the Orthodox Church, who is president of the National Council for Freedom of Religious Equality of Ecuador (CONALIR) and Bishop Abraham Sarabia of the Orthodox Church, other Christian pastors, Catholic missionaries and several Jewish people were on hand to launch the organization.

The Europe and Middle East Region established an IAPD office in Vienna on October 18 within Peace Museum Vienna, which seeks to inspire people by informing them about heroic peacemakers. Dr. Ali

Ahmad is the director of Peace Museum Vienna. Peter Haider, president of UPF-Austria, took charge of the event and Dr. Michael Balcomb, regional chair of UPF in Europe and the Middle East spoke. The office will oversee IAPD activities not in Austria alone but throughout their vast region as other national chapters open.



Kiev to New York

The following day, three hundred people were on hand in Kiev, Ukraine, as IAPP came to life during a conference titled "Toward Interdependence and Mutual Prosperity: The Role of Public, Youth and Spiritual Leaders," which UPF and the Ukrainian Peace Council held. Volodymyr Novokhatsky of the Kiev Prosecutor's Office (and deputy head of Ukraine's Peace Council) conveyed congratulations to everyone from Leonid Kravchuk, president of Ukraine (1991–1994) whom True Father had met during one of his speaking tours. Rev. Dr. Igor Onyshchuk, an archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, who spoke at ILC 2018 in Seoul, became a UPF ambassador for peace.

Dr. Milan Ratna Shakya, a professor and head of the Department of Buddhist Studies at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, is chair of IAPD, the founding of which took place in the exquisite Yak and Yeti Hotel in Kathmandu on October 28. On hand were 148 people as Rabindra Prasad Adhikari, minister of culture, tourism and civil aviation and the honored guest at the event struck a gong as did Dr. Chung Sik Yong, chairman of UPF-Asia-Pacific and Ek Nath Dhakal, a former government minister and a devoted Unificationist.

The chief imam over all imam organizations; Dr. Umar Ahmed Ilyasi, the executive vice president of the International Buddhist Confederation, Ven. Lama Lobzang; and Rev. R. R. Bhaskar, a Christian, were the religious figures who spoke at the founding of IAPD in multi-religious India in New Delhi, on November 3.

On November 7, in the Morocco Room of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Morocco, Habib El Malki, president of the House of Representatives, led the inaugural meeting of IAPD-Morocco. Leaders of all political parties were on hand. Mrs. Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, co-chair of IAPP in Europe and former president of the parliament of Luxembourg, spoke, as did Dr. Walsh. Taj Hamad, UPF vice president, was among those who made brief comments.

On the same day, 10,424 miles (16,775.8 km) away in Lima, Peru, at an event that included the conferring of the status of ambassador for peace upon religious figures, the founding of the same benevolent organization took place. Afterward, Mrs. Faith Jones, president of WFWP- Peru gave her personal life testimony to an audience that featured prominent religious figures of various faiths.

On November 12, three hundred people of faith, and civic leaders, some of whom have known True Parents for decades, completed a three-day conference, Overcoming Division, Building Unity, at the New Yorker Hotel. Before heading out to Nassau Colosseum to hear True Mother speak to thousands of people at the Peace Starts with Me rally, they solemnly established their national chapter of IAPD.